

government for low income assistance and only about, oh, I guess about \$4 million would be considered for weatherization. What happens is, you have a low income family. They have an older home. They get low income energy assistance and that pays for their utility bills and that older home is obviously going to have problems with poor insulation and it is poorly built and they have high energy bills and that is all paid for through our tax dollars and it seems to me a much wiser use of our tax dollars if more money was going into the weatherization and we wouldn't need quite as much money going into the energy assistance. The more we put into weatherization the more we save in energy and the more tax dollars are saved as a result of that and there is a bill, LB 228, which would divert another million dollars into home weatherization, it is down in the Revenue Committee, but again the point is that we are paying for it one way or we are paying for it the other way and it seems to me the long term benefit is from the weatherization and I wish a higher priority was placed on it. But right now it is separated off in the Energy Department. The assistance program is over in the Welfare Department and it seems these two things dealing with the same type of people and the same problem, if combined, would see a better use of that money and the priorities that I think would better benefit the State of Nebraska over the long run might be implemented. It is, in my estimation, a very wise change in policy, would I think help us a great deal in dealing with one of the severe problems we have in this state in low income energy assistance because we have many low income who are unable to pay those utility bills that everybody has seen the last few months and previous years, a hundred and two hundred plus in gas bills during the winter are outrageous for any of us but for someone on low income it is almost impossible. We've got to deal with that problem and these two programs do that and should be combined over into the Energy Office.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Warner and then Senator Newell.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I just wanted to comment on Senator Landis' remarks earlier that there will be an amendment offered on Select File that will permit the transfer for the '83-'84 fiscal year of the block grant in which the energy funds are contained in the amount of \$1.6 million which if not done would require a \$1.6 million of general fund to replace it and Senator Landis indicated concurrence of that problem would not be created. Secondly, as he also indicated, the amendment will permit the Department of Energy to contract with Welfare for those people who are on welfare and also then avoiding any general fund impact as the fiscal note indi-